



COMDTINST 5230.53

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 5230.53

Subj: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEGAL AUTOMATED WORKSTATION DATABASE

1. **PURPOSE.** This instruction establishes policy and procedures for use of the Legal Automated Workstation Database (LAWS-db) throughout the Legal Program.
2. **ACTION.** District commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands and all divisions in the Office of Chief Counsel shall comply with this instruction. The staff legal officers at the Coast Guard Academy, TRACEN Cape May, CG Yard, RTC Yorktown, and SUPRTCEN Kodiak shall comply with this Instruction upon receiving the LAWS-db software and initial training.
3. **BACKGROUND.** At any given moment Coast Guard legal offices and divisions around the nation have thousands of legal matters under consideration. These matters must be tracked to ensure they are processed efficiently. In addition, the Chief Counsel must be able to measure program processes, work load, and results in order to meet external requirements and to manage the Legal Program. Because no off the shelf software compatible with the the Standard Workstation exists to meet these requirements, the Office of Chief Counsel developed a custom application called the "Legal Automated Workstation Database" (LAWS-db). This Instruction implements use of the LAWS-db within the Legal Program and provides standardized procedures for information collection.

4. **LAWS-db PROCEDURES.**

- a. The LAWS-db has been designated the primary case tracking and management database for the Legal Program and shall be used by all Legal Program personnel (including reservists) assigned to offices where the software is installed.

EXCEPTIONS: Users of the Civil Action Tracking System at MLCP(1) and the household goods database at D2(dl) are not required to duplicate their entries in the LAWS-db. However, all other work shall be recorded in the LAWS-db.

- b. Some LAWS-db data elements are intended to serve the dual purposes of local case tracking/work load management and Legal Program analysis. In order to accurately analyze this information using the LAWS-db Executive Information System (LAWS-EIS), these items must be consistently recorded by all LAWS-db users. Enclosure (1) contains instructions regarding entry of information into these portions of the database.

5. **APPLICATION SUPPORT.** The Office of Chief Counsel has arranged for application support with the Coast Guard Electronics Engineering Center (EECEN). EECEN support includes both hot line assistance & application maintenance ("bug" fixes).

- a. HOT LINE ASSISTANCE. The following types of questions and problems can be referred to the EECEN hot line:

- (1) Technical and configuration assistance (e.g., adding LAWS-db to Context Manager or maintaining data files).
- (2) LAWS-db administrator functions (e.g., adding or deleting users or changing the default printer).
- (3) Creating or modifying Ad Hoc reports.
- (4) General user assistance.

Users/Administrators should first attempt to answer their question(s) using the LAWS-db User and/or Administrators Manual(s).

- b. APPLICATION MAINTENANCE. EECEN will document all reported LAWS-db bugs, correct them, update the application, and periodically distribute the updates to all LAWS-db sites. Changes to the User and Administrator Manuals will be provided with each new version of the application.

- c. AVAILABILITY. The EECEN hot line telephone number is (609) 523-7324 and assistance is available Monday-Friday from 0700 to 1830 Eastern time. E-Mail inquiries should be addressed to: Hotline/EECEN.
7. POLICY QUESTIONS OR CHANGES. Questions concerning the material in this Instruction and recommendations for improvements to the LAWS-db should be sent to Commandant (G-LPD). E-Mail inquiries should be addressed to: LAWS-db/G-L.

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Chief Counsel

Encl: (1) Legal Automated Workstation Database Policy & Procedures

LEGAL AUTOMATED WORKSTATION DATABASE POLICY & PROCEDURES

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Historical Background.

1. The LAWS Database was originally conceived as part of the "Legal Automated Workstation" (LAWS) project, which in turn had its genesis in the loss of clerical personnel upon Coast Guard realignment in 1987. From the beginning of the development of LAWS, the Legal Program recognized that there was a need in the field, as well as in Headquarters, to track cases, work load, and results at the individual attorney and unit/program levels. The Legal Program initially identified a commercial software product known as "Paperchaser" to provide case and time tracking; however, the developer went out of business shortly after developing a Beta (test) version of the application for the Coast Guard. This turn of events, together with the overall unsatisfactory nature of Paperchaser, led to the demise of the original database effort.
2. The need to track cases and time did not disappear, however, and so a decision was made at the 1990 Legal Officers Conference to revalidate the Program's requirements and to determine whether the Paperchaser code (now owned by the Coast Guard) could meet those needs or whether a new data base would have to be developed. A system analyst, hired to compare legal program requirements against Paperchaser's functionality, met with representatives from the Headquarters divisions, the MLC's and two district legal staffs in the Spring of 1991. As a result of this data modeling effort, Paperchaser was deemed unsuitable and the contractor was hired to build a prototype data base to validate the Program needs.
3. The prototype was demonstrated at the 1992 Legal Officers Conference, and the Chief Counsel decided to move forward with development of the application for Program-wide implementation. The Beta version of LAWS-db was delivered in Summer 1992 and was installed in two Headquarters divisions for initial testing and evaluation. Input from these divisions led to further improvements and a follow-on contract to develop a production version.
4. The Beta version next was tested in several district legal offices, whose input led to a

standardized package of case categories/types and several additional enhancements to the production version. On 23 September 1993, the Office of Command, Control and Communications approved the production version of the LAWS-db for deployment Coast Guard-wide. LAWS-db then was installed at the remaining District legal offices, the MLC's, Headquarters divisions, and several staff legal offices. Initial on-site training and documentation was provided when LAWS-db was installed. At the same time, application support was established at the Electronics Engineering Center (EECEN), which includes hot line assistance, documentation, bug fixes, and code maintenance. This COMDTINST provides the guidance necessary to meet the overall case tracking and management requirements of the Legal Program.

- B. Purposes For The LAWS-db. The LAWS-db is intended to serve two primary purposes; case and work load tracking, and measurement of program processes and results. The database is structured to add value at all levels: user, management, and program.
1. Case and Work Load Tracking. The first and primary purpose of the LAWS-db is to assist attorneys and their supervisors in managing individual and office work load. Nearly all features are provided to assist in this effort. For instance, the "Your Cases" listing provides a quick look at one's current case load, while the Attorney Schedule function permits each individual user to view upcoming action dates and deadlines. The LAWS-db also includes a number of tools to manage office work load, such as:
 - a. The quick search functions of the "Find Cases" feature (e.g., list of open cases by attorney, office, or case type).
 - b. "Ad hoc" querying and reporting (e.g., to generate reports of cases completed by an attorney during an OER period or cases completed in support of a particular program or unit during the year).
 - c. Custom reporting (e.g., the open case tracking report provided with the application by G LPD).
 2. Measurement. The second purpose of the LAWS-db is to enable the Chief Counsel to collect case and time tracking information to permit Program management analysis in support of the PPBES function,

and in compliance with recent mandates to develop process and results measurements, such as the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, Executive Order 12862 regarding customer service standards, and COMDTINST 5224.9A (TQM Measurement). In each instance, the Legal Program must be able to generate hard data. Used correctly, the LAWS-db will provide this capability.

- C. Ease of Use. The LAWS-db was designed with the user in mind. When the user logs into his or her computer, the database can be automatically opened in Context Manager, where it remains available at all times, only a keystroke away. Only a few entries are required to open or close a case, and on-screen help is available for virtually every item. Pop up option windows are provided for entry of supplementary information, and user level scheduling, reporting and case finding tools require just a few key strokes.

II. REQUIREMENTS.

A. LAWS-db "Cases".

1. The LAWS-db is structured around the concept of a "case." For the most part, each "case" is a separate "legal matter." For instance, each civil penalty appeal, court-martial, mast, bridge regulation, administrative investigation, FTCA claim, etc. generates an individual "case" in the LAWS-db. The concept of a "case" needs to be more encompassing, however, because the LAWS-db is intended to gather information about each legal office and division's enter work load*. Users also need to track QAT/NWGs, telephonic advice, training time, recruiting visits, etc., even though these are not "cases", per se.
2. To reduce the data-collection burden, offices may choose to group legal matters not normally considered "cases" into single "consolidated" LAWS-db cases. For instance, for Legal Program purposes it is not necessary to track each individual phone call for advice as a separate LAWS-db case. Instead, legal offices can collect this type of

¹ The term "work load" is intended to define the amount of time devoted to supporting all clients even yourself, such as when you attend CLE (the Program supported would be Legal (GAL)). "Work load" does not include "overhead". Consequently, users should keep track of training time, time spent in general TOM meetings (i.e., a OMB, NOT a OAT/NWG dealing with a particular subject, and thus a particular program client), and professional reading (case type "Training", program "GAL"). On the other hand, users need not keep track of routine administrative time such as time spent reading routine E-Mails and general in box material, taking voice mail messages, etc. "Management" time also would be considered "overhead." Thus, time spent by the Legal Officer/Division Chief/Ass't Chief managing the Office/Division need not be tracked.

information in consolidated cases, so long as each such case only supports one particular Coast Guard program. Nevertheless, legal officers and individual attorneys may wish to go beyond this requirement to meet local needs.

- B. Mandatory Entries. In addition to the requirement to keep time, discussed below, there are only ten required entries in the LAWS-db: Case Category, Case Type, Case Number, Case Title, Date Received, Responsible Attorney, Program Code, District, Unit, and Case Priority. Of these, three are auto-generated by the computer (Date Received, District and Case Number), and four are "defaults"; that is, the computer assumes certain answers based on your user profile or the last case accessed (Case Category, Case Type, Responsible Attorney, and Case Priority). Only three--Case Title, Unit and Program Code--require free form entry in every instance. (Of course, all items except the case number can be modified when a case is created.) Policy regarding each of these required entries, plus timekeeping, follow.
1. Case Categories/Types. The LAWS-db case categories and types are standardized to permit consistent data reporting by all legal offices and divisions. Case categories conform to the broad fields of law practiced in the Coast Guard. These categories are further divided into case types, which permit the program and legal offices to more accurately track the nature of the work load. Additional case types can be created, as necessary; however, this function is reserved to G-LPD to maintain consistency. NOTE: Each LAWS-db case supports only one case category/type. Mixed case categories or types cannot be combined in a single LAWS-db case.
 2. Case Number. The case number is automatically generated by the computer. While the sequential numbering of cases continues from year to year, the Fiscal Year code (digits 3 & 4) resets on 1 October each year. Since case numbering and timekeeping is based on the fiscal year, all consolidated "timekeeping cases" (cases opened ONLY to collect time, which otherwise would never truly be "closed", see section II.D below) should be closed on the last day of the fiscal year and new cases opened the next day (if needed).
 3. Case Title. There are no particular requirements concerning case titles (except that you have to have one!). However, while the maximum length of a case title is 60 characters, only the first 40

characters are displayed in the "Your Cases" list and the list of cases generated by a "find cases" search. Consequently it is advisable to put the most important information in the first 40 characters. The remaining characters then could be reserved for ancillary information.

4. Date Received. This date is automatically generated by the computer, which assumes that the case was received on the day it was created. The user has the ability to--and should--change the date generated to reflect the actual date the case is received. Failure to do so will skew the calculation of the time the case remained open (the same logic applies to the "Date Closed" field, which also presumes the case is being closed on the day the entry is made).
5. Responsible Attorney. Once again, the computer generates this entry, which consists of the initials of the person responsible for the case. The computer assumes that the responsible attorney is the person presently signed into the LAWS-db at that workstation. This default comes from the original Legal Automated Workstation project concept, which presumed that after realignment in 1987 most attorneys would open and manage their own cases. The LAWS-db does permit the user (such as the office Yeoman) to assign the case to another individual by changing the "responsible attorney" entry. This feature also permits legal officers to reassign cases whenever needed.
6. Program Code. The "Program Code" entry in the LAWS-db permits the Chief Counsel, Headquarters division chiefs, field legal officers, and individual attorneys to determine how their work is apportioned among various Coast Guard clients.
 - a. The LAWS-db Program Codes correspond to the programs identified in the Coast Guard planning, programming and budgeting system. Each code is directly linked to a program manager in Headquarters who oversees the particular program and reports to the Commandant. Figure (1) lists each of the programs, their codes and Headquarters program directors.
 - b. By linking every LAWS-db case to a particular program, the Chief Counsel can determine what portion of the Legal Program's resources are devoted to supporting each PPBES program. This information is critical in justifying requests for additional resources when, for

instance, a new law, regulation or policy increases program work load (e.g., the recent imposition mandatory ethics training).

- c. In some cases, a program code covers multiple functions. For example, Enforcement of Laws and Treaties (ELT) includes drug interdiction, fisheries enforcement, immigration and other activities. At first, this code may seem overly broad. However, that group of activities is administered by a single Headquarters program manager, and represents an important process measure for the Chief Counsel. When needed, more detailed reporting can be produced by querying case categories, types, etc.
 - d. Picking the correct program code from the list in Figure (1) occasionally can be somewhat difficult. For instance, it is not necessarily obvious that military justice cases and Ethics advice support Personnel (GAP). Reference to the SSIC Manual can be a help, but occasionally only common sense and experience will provide the answer.
7. Unit (and District). The LAWS-db software requires collection of the "Unit" supported for every case, and entering the unit causes the computer to auto-generate the appropriate ATU number for the district, MLC, etc. to which the unit is assigned. Although currently required, since the Chief Counsel's focus is at the program rather than the unit level, these items will be made optional in a future version of the LAWS-db.
- a. Because every Coast Guard unit is available in the database, legal offices may desire to collect information broken down by unit even though this is not required. This would enable the office to determine its work load by unit and adjust support as necessary to meet that need. It also would permit the office to report the level of support to its unit customers. However, as noted in paragraph II.A.2 above, legal offices may find it less burdensome to collect information in "consolidated cases," especially with regard to "oral advice." This is acceptable, so long as each consolidated case supports only one program.
 - b. To illustrate, a district legal staff may desire to open an oral advice case entitled

"Post-Employment Conflicts of Interest Advice." It would be permissible to open a single LAWS-d case on this subject to collect all of the time spent giving this type of advice, regardless of the unit(s) receiving the advice. Because a "Unit" must be entered in the database, however, the most appropriate entry for this case would be the district itself. (NOTE: It will be possible to record a unit's OPFAC identifier with each timekeeping entry in the next version of LAWS-db. Thus, legal offices will be able to use "consolidated" timekeeping cases and yet still have the capability to measure work load by unit.)

- c. On the other hand, it would NOT be acceptable to open a single case for "Oral Advice to MSO X," because this advice likely would cross program lines (e.g., Marine Inspection, Marine Licensing, Port Safety and Security). Separate cases would have to be opened for each program supported at the unit,

- 8. Case Priority. This entry is for local use, and the default is "Routine." Other choices include Urgent, High, and Low. This feature allows prioritization of cases and permits sorting by priority.

- C. Timekeeping. Timekeeping or "time tracking" is mandatory, and all attorneys, paralegals and clerical personnel in the Legal Program are expected to track their time in the LAWS-db. Regarding the method of timekeeping, the Program has set only three requirements:

- 1. Keep time honestly and try to record all time spent supporting clients (as noted in footnote 1, above, users need not track "overhead" time). This does not mean that time must be kept perfectly, it simply means that users should attempt to enter all time spent on each matter and that time "padding" is prohibited. Since time can only be entered in tenths of an hour, with a minimum entry of 0.1 hr (6 minutes), estimation is expected. Bottom line: All the Program expects is that each user do his or-her best to record their time with reasonable accuracy. The Program is not going to track whether anyone logs a forty-hour workweek!
- 2. Each time keeping entry must indicate whether the user was engaging in an Attorney, Paralegal or Support mode for the particular period of time.

This is important because it permits the program to justify requests for additional resources with particularity. For instance, if an office has two fully employed clerical support personnel yet the attorneys spend an additional work year performing support functions, that office has a legitimate claim for an additional support person.

3. The type of time must be indicated. There are six types of time included in the LAWS-db: Mtg, Ovr, Reg, Res, Tvl, and Tri, which stand for Meeting, Overtime, Regular, Reserve, Travel, and Trial.
 - a. Meeting. Use this code to record time spent preparing for (i.e., reviewing "read ahead" packages) and attending meetings (e.g., staff meetings, QMB meetings, etc.).
 - b. Overtime. Use this code to record time spent outside your normal working hours doing office work, whether done at the office, at home, or on the road.
 - c. Regular. Use this code to record time for work done during your normal work day.
 - d. Reserve. This code is intended to help the Program track the number of work years devoted to the program by reservists, Coast Guard and DOD. Only reservists (IDT, ADT, TEMAC, not reserve officers on active duty) should use this code, and all reserve time (even meeting and travel time) should be entered as "Res".
 - e. Travel. Use this code only to record actual travel time. The best way to determine what time to count is to think of a travel claim. Count the time from initial departure until you would enter the "TD" code on the claim form. Then count the time from departure from the TD location until you would enter the "MC" code. DO NOT count time spent at the motel or other accommodation as travel time! Work done at the place of accommodation is either Regular or Overtime. DO count any time spent doing work while on a commercial Carrier traveling to or from a mission as both travel and Regular, Reserve, or Overtime, as appropriate. Yes, this is double counting, but travel time is collected primarily to determine the amount of time spent on the road, not work load.

- f. Trial. Use this code to record time actually spent in court, including in chambers time. Do not use it record trial preparation time, which should be recorded as either Regular or overtime.
- D. "Timekeeping Cases". As described in paragraph II A.2 and II.B.7 above, it is acceptable to consolidate related legal matters into a single LAWS-db case so long as they pertain to the same case category/type and support the same program. These cases can be opened solely to collect the time spent by individuals in the same office/division/branch dealing with similar matters.
 - 1. To illustrate, each legal office could open a LAWS-db case entitled "Direct Commission Lawyer Recruiting", their and every individual in the office that one case file. The "Responsible Attorney" would be the person in the office primarily assigned to do recruiting, the case category/type is "Program Development/Recruiting", and the program supported is Legal (GAL). NOTE: One could argue that, because the subject matter is recruiting, Personnel (GAP) is the program supported, but GAL is preferable since Legal is the ultimate beneficiary of the DCL program. One could similarly argue that military justice cases support the Legal Program, but the ultimate beneficiary of any court-martial is the Personnel Program (GAP).
 - 2. In the alternative, each individual attorney could open a LAWS-db case on the same topic. This method of consolidating related matters permits more accurate individual work load tracking and reporting, but it multiplies the number of cases to be tracked. Since the Program would collect the same information either way, the method to be chosen is left to the discretion of the legal officer/division chief.
- E. Legal Assistance. In addition to the items required for all cases, a "client info" window is provided for Legal Assistance. Space is provided for a Social Security Number (SSN), which is not required and should be left blank. It will be removed the system in a future version of LAWS-db. The last name*, first name and phone number items are for local use. The remaining items--Client type, Sponsor Status, Rate (will be

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Even though provided for local use, this field was made mandatory so that it can be searched on for client conflicts purposes.

changed to "Rank" in a future version), and Service are needed for legal assistance work load analysis/program measurement and shall be completed for all Legal Assistance cases, which cannot be combined into "consolidated cases". Since legal assistance is an aspect of work-life, the program code is "GAP".

- F. Military Justice Cases. The LAWS-db was distributed with these Military Justice case types: Arrest/Delivery, 4th-Search, 5th/Art 31, Confinement, Charges, and Other. Because LAWS-db is a relational database, the Case Type cannot be modified. Thus, all court-martial cases should be entered under the general "charges" type. The actual court-martial forum, (General, Special, Summary) then should be recorded in the "disposition" field. If the forum subsequently changes, say from a general to special court-martial, the "Disposition" then can be changed accordingly. This configuration provides the flexibility needed to manage Military Justice Cases. The Program Code for all Military Justice cases is "GAP".
- G. Other Requirements. As usage of the LAWS-db increases, divisions within the Office of Chief Counsel may desire to further standardize data collection within certain case categories/types to facilitate periodic reporting. Examples of areas ripe for such standardization include Ethics (G-LGL), Field Regulations (G-LRA), and Environmental Compliance (G-LEL). Division chiefs contemplating standardization shall work with G-LPD to develop the proposed modifications to the LAWS-db, which then will be "chopped" through the affected District Legal Offices/MLC Legal Divisions for input prior to approval.

III. ADMINISTRATION AND SECURITY.

- A. LAWS-db Administrator. Because the LAWS-db has the capability to store sensitive information (e.g., procurement information), it has been designated a "sensitive application" as defined in the Automated Information Systems Security Manual, COMDTINST M5500.13A. Consequently, each LAWS-db site must have a LAWS-db Administrator, who shall be designated in writing upon receipt of this COMDTINST. A copy of the designation letter shall be forwarded to Commandant (G-LPD). If desired, an alternate also may be designated. The LAWS-db administrator is responsible for performing the support and security functions described below and is the point of contact for local LAWS-db users, Headquarters (G-LPD), and the EECEN hot line. Standard Workstation administrator experience is not required for this function.

- B. Daily Operations, Maintenance and Security. The local LAWS-db administrator will perform the routine support and security functions necessary for daily use of the application. Generally, those functions are located on the "System Maintenance" menu and are thoroughly described in the LAWS-db Administrator's Manual. In addition, specific instructions and recommendations are provided below.
1. To prevent accidental or unauthorized intentional changes to the LAWS-db configuration, only the LAWS-db administrator and alternate, if any, shall have access to the "System Maintenance" menu. Specific instructions on the use of menu locks are contained in the LAWS-db Administrator's Manual.
 2. A LAWS-db login password shall be assigned to all users, including "SYS". Users shall reset their passwords every six months at a minimum.
 3. The "Create Keyword" batch routine should be run at least once a week, but preferably once a day, so the keyword search feature will work reliably. Since it takes some time for the routine to run, the best times to run it are upon arrival in the morning or upon departing for lunch.
 4. In order to minimize the risk of losing important data, the LAWS-db directory must be backed up daily. Generally, this function is performed by the local IRM support staff. IMPORTANT: On the Standard Workstation, any files that are in use during the backup process are skipped. Thus, it is extremely important that all users log out of LAWS-db before the backups are started. Additionally, the Standard Workstation Security Handbook, COMDTINST M5500.17, provides specific requirements for the handling and storage of backup materials. Thus, the LAWS-db administrator shall coordinate this with the users and the local Standard Workstation operator.
 5. As noted earlier, some of the LAWS-db data elements are intended to serve the dual purposes of local case tracking and Legal Program analysis. The collection of such information in LAWS-db, must be consistent throughout the Legal Program. Thus, upon receipt of this Instruction, no changes shall be made to the configuration of LAWS-db Categories, Types, or menu options without prior approval of G-LPD.

**Official Coast Guard Program Codes
for use with
The LAWS Database**

- OPERATING PROGRAMS -

PROGRAM	CODE	PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Bridge Administration	BA	G-N
Defense Operations	DO	G-O
Enforcement of Laws & Treaties	ELT	G-O
Ice Operations	IO	G-N
Marine Environmental Response	MER	G-M
Marine Inspection	MI	G-M
Marine Licensing	ML	G-M
Port Safety & Security	PSS	G-M
Radio Aids to Navigation	RA	G-N
Rec. Boating Safety/Auxiliary	RBS	G-N
Reserve/Reserve Training	RT	G-R
Search & Rescue	SAB	G-N
Short Range Aids to Navigation	SRA	G-N
Vessel Traffic Services	VTs	G-N

- SUPPORT PROGRAMS -

General Administration	GA	G-CRC
Acquisition	GAA	G-A
Public Affairs	GAB	G-CV
COntingency Preparedness	GAC	G-R
Engineering & Logistics	GAE	G-E
Financial	GAF	G-CRC
Civil Rights	GAH	G-H
Investigations & Security	GAI	G-O
Health Services	GAK	G-K
Legal	GAL	G-L
Intelligence	GAN	G-O
Personnel & Training	GAP	G-P
Occupational Safety & Health	GAS	G-K
Command, Control & Communication	GAT	G-T
Research & Development	GRD	G-E

Figure (1)